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From: Abrams, Dan
Sent: Sun 8/16/2015 11:23:05 PM
Subject: Fw: responses to 3 questions from AP Montana

From: Mylott, Richard
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2015 4:11 PM
To: EOC Public Information
Cc: StClair, Christie
Subject: responses to 3 questions from AP Montana

All- I am working with Christie to shake loose some media responses this pm. These are answers to a subset of questions posed by AP reporter from Montana, Matt Brown. These have been approved by Area Command, need EOC review. Please advise.

Draft Responses for AP Questions, Region 8, Aug. 14, 2015

Question numbers are taken from the AP list.

1. Had Gold King Mine been designated a Superfund site, what would have been the chances of the spill happening?

It is not possible to predict what the impact of a National Priorities List designation may have had on the likelihood of the release occurring.

4. Was a preliminary assessment ever completed on the Gold King Mine or for a group of mines including Gold King?

A number of federal and state agencies have conducted site assessment and characterization studies in the Upper Animas River Watershed starting in the early 1990s. The *Site Inspection, Analytical Results Report – Cement Creek Watershed, April 1998*, and the *Site Inspection, Analytical Results Report – Upper Animas Watershed, March 1999*, address mines in the watershed above Silverton including the Gold King Mine.

5. It's my understanding that the EPA has said a water treatment plant estimated to cost \$12-\$17m (and \$1M a year to operate) would be able to clean the water in the Animas. Is that correct? And if so, is it the type of expense that Superfund would cover?

The studies the EPA and other federal and state agencies have been conducting are designed to determine the scope and feasibility of water treatment in the Animas River Watershed. The agencies have not yet arrived at a final decision regarding the best alternative for conducting water treatment. Costs for constructing water treatment plants at similar sites in Colorado have

ranged from \$12M to \$20M in recent years. Annual operating costs often range from slightly less than \$1M to \$1.5M.